[28th August 1926

Mr. R. VEERIAN :—"May I know whether they have announced that Government Order which was accepted by them?"

The hon. Khan Bahadur MUHAMMAD USMAN SAHIB Bahadur :—"Naturally the Government Order must have been communicated."

Mr. A. RANGANATHA MUDALIYAR :—"May I take it that they have not forwarded the petition referred to in this question to the local authorities concerned?"

The hon. Khan Bahadur MUHAMMAD USMAN SAHIB Bahadur :—"That is a matter for the local authorities. The hon. Member might himself bring it to their notice."

Alleged disabilities of depressed classes in certain villages of North Arcot district.

*2401 *Q.*—Mr. R. VEERIAN: Will the hon. the Home Member be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether the Government are aware that the depressed classes in the villages of (1) No. 37, Uthirampatti, Arkonam taluk, North Arcot district, (2) Melnaickenpolliem village, Wallajah taluk, Vellore division, North Arcot district, and (3) Annanallur village, Wallajah taluk, North Arcot district, suffer very much for want of public pathway to carry their dead bodies to the burial ground for burial;

(*b*) whether it is a fact that the caste Hindus object strongly to their ('depressed classes') passing through their ('Hindus') patta lands to go to the burial ground carrying their dead bodies;

(*c*) whether any steps have been taken on the petitions submitted by the depressed classes of those villages on 15th July 1926 through me to the Commissioner of Labour, Madras; and

(*d*) if so, what is the result of the enquiries made by the Commissioner of Labour?

A.—(*a*), (*b*), (*c*) & (*d*) The Government have no information.

Mr. A. RANGANATHA MUDALIYAR :—"Sir, here is a complaint that the people suffer very much for want of public pathway to carry the dead bodies to the burial ground for burial. It seems to me to be a sufficiently important matter to call for the information."

The hon. Khan Bahadur MUHAMMAD USMAN SAHIB Bahadur :—"I have no objection. I shall consider the suggestion."

Forests.

Regeneration and exploitation of forests.

*2402 *Q.*—Mr. J. A. SALDANHA : Will the hon. the Home Member be pleased—

(*a*) to place before the House a brief account of the methods, ways and means, and official staff employed for five years closing with the year 1925 in connexion with the preparation of working plans and with the regeneration and exploitation as well as the conservation of forests; and

(*b*) to state what are the schemes in that connexion adopted for the year 1926-27?

A.—(*a*) Full information will be found in the annual administration reports of the department which are placed on the Editors' Table. It is not possible to allocate the staff to the various branches of work with any accuracy.

(*b*) During 1926-27 there will be nine officers employed on working plans, nine employed under the Chief Forest Engineer and the rest employed on regeneration and conservancy which will include among other duties, the construction of buildings and roads as well as the demarcation of fuel coupes, the extraction of timber and fuel, maintenance of boundaries, the collection of revenue and protection. It is not however possible to give within a reasonable compass the exact details of the work to be done.

Mr. J. A. SALDANHA :—" With reference to the answer given in clause (*a*) that full information will be found in the annual administration reports of the department which are placed on the Editors' table, I may say I have read all these administration reports. This department is a puzzle to me. I think it was one of the Secretaries of the Forest Department that said on a previous occasion that this regeneration work and that of working plans were done very badly or perfunctorily. I want to know what this department is. It is a puzzle to the public. That is the reason I have asked this question again. We cannot find anything in the administration report. Can I get a more definite information ?"

The hon. Khan Bahadur MUHAMMAD USMAN SAHIB Bahadur :—" There is no puzzle about it. If the hon. Member reads the administration report, he will have a clear idea."

Mr. J. A. SALDANHA :—" I say I read it and I did not get a clear idea."

The hon. Khan Bahadur MUHAMMAD USMAN SAHIB Bahadur :—" I am very sorry."

Mr. J. A. SALDANHA :—" During the budget debate, the Government admitted all this and gave their reasons for appointing a number of officers and treating their pay as non-votable or untouchable. They said that everything was done badly or perfunctorily in the past and a new staff had been created at an enormous cost of Rs. 50,000, or so."

Mr. V. PANDRANG ROW :—" I remember saying that it was not quite satisfactory."

The hon. Khan Bahadur MUHAMMAD USMAN SAHIB Bahadur :—" If it is a puzzle to the hon. Member for South Kanara, I am sorry I cannot help it."

Jails.

Prisoners suffering from chronic complaints in the Alipore Jail.

* 2403 *Q.*—Mr. A. RANGANATHA MUDALIYAR : Will the hon. the Home Member and the hon. the Law Member be pleased to state the number of prisoners in the Alipore Jail, Bellary, suffering from chronic complaints of one kind or another and the reasons, if any, for their non-discharge from the prison ?